SUFFERINGS

OF

Leicestershire & North-hamptonshire,

By Informers and Priests.

ALSO,

God's Mercies

Testified unto, And

MANS CRUELTY

Bore Witness against;

Being a faithful *Demonstration*, given forth in the Dread of the Lord, against the Cruelty of

PERSECUTION,

As it hath of late been manifested, and notoriously acted by the Priest and People of the Town of *Farthingstone*, in the County of *North-hampton*, to the shame of their professed Religion, and to the injury of those who truly fear God, and Worship him.

Which may be as a *Prospect* unto them, whereby they may behold themselves and consider the Evil of their ways, and be warned to timely Repentance in this their Day.

By our love to Christ, that Love worketh no ill to our Neighbour, and that he that loveth not his Neighbour as himself, is a Transgressor of a greater Command than the Law of Man, W. Pooley.

Behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into Prison, Rev. 2. 10.

London, Printed in the Year 1683.

A ſhort Account of ſome Sufferings of the People called *Quakers*, in *Leiceſterſhire* and *Northamptonſhire*.

The Sufferings of John Adams, Francis Broughton, Hannah Fiſh, William Smith, *and others, for* Harborough-*Meeting in* Leiceſterſhire.

WHither *John Smith* and one *Ricket* his Servant, and *Tobiah Smith* his Aſſiſtant came to our peaceable Meeting, it being in ſilence to wait on the Lord, the ſecond day of the ſecond Moneth, called *April*, 1682. when they were collecting Money (the Meeting being over) for the Poor, and ſome Friends gone away when they came; for which *John Adams* was fined by *Samuel Cole* Juſtice, 20 *l.* as being the reputed Owner of the Meeting-Houſe, whereas he was not the Owner; beſides the Fines of the ſaid *Hannah Fiſh*, *Francis Broughton*, *William Smith*, and others.

And the ſaid *John Smith* and *Ricket*, on the 23d of the ſaid Moneth, came again to the ſaid Meeting-place, and after ſwore before the ſaid Juſtice, *That* John Adams *was there*; who was not, as before the Juſtice he offered to prove; and for that Meeting *William Smith* was fined for the Houſe 20 *l.*

And the ſaid *J. Smith* and his Servant ſwore, *That the ſaid* Francis Broughton, John Adams *and* Hannah Fiſh, *and others, were at the Meeting the* 10th *of* May; though neither *John Smith* nor his Man were ſeen at the Meeting at that time by any there; for which, and the other ſaid Meetings, the ſaid Juſtice fined the ſaid *John Adams* 20 *l.* 10 *s.* and the ſaid *F. Broughton* 11 *l.* 15 *s.* and the ſaid *Hannah Fiſh* 10 *l.* 5 *s.* and the ſaid *William Smith* 20 *l.* 15 *s.*

Robert Dexter, on the 23d of the 2d Moneth aforeſaid, the very next day after he was ſworn Conſtable (after the deceaſe

of *J. Cork*, the younger, who suffered the Distress of 5*l.* for not distraining on his Neighbours Goods) came with two Officers, and warned *John Adams*, and several others at their Houses, to go to Church, and at night warned them again to appear the next day before the Justices, and next day but one brought a Warrant about Sun-rising, and fetcht the said *John Adams*, *Francis Broughton* and *Hannah Fish*, and others, and carried them nine Miles to the said *Cole* (as fittest for the Informer) who then fined them as aforesaid: And the said *Dexter* next Morning about half an hour after Sun-rising came with about eight Officers, and several other Assistants, and climbed over a Hedge a back-way, coming in at a back-Door (the fore-door being not yet opened) and using boisterous Language, took from the said *John Adams* two Cows and two Heifers, with the most part of his Houshold Goods, in all worth 22*l.* 11*s.* and next day carried the said Cattel to a Fair to sell (so quick and dexterous in his Master, the God of the World's sinister Work, was this Constable *Dexter.*) And for same Meetings were taken by the said Constable, from the said *Francis Broughton*, a poor Weaver, his Loome (being contrary to Law, which prohibits the distraining of Working Tools) and some other Houshold Goods, to the value of 4*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.* and from *Hannah Fish* Goods and Chattels to the value of 16*l.* 2*s.* These three Friends were Inhabitants of *Great Bowden.*

Some other lesser Distresses about the same time:

From *William Smith*, for his Fines for the Meetings aforesaid, by the Officers of *Harborough* were taken of Shop-goods and Houshold-goods to the value of 10*l.* 10*s.* 8*d.* and also account taken of other Goods mark'd, though not then taken away.

And for the said Meetings were fined *Joseph Fish*'s Wife 20*s.* *Elizabeth Harper* 25*s.* and *Samuel Shuter's* Wife 25*s.* all of *Harborough.*

Upon the Act for 12*d.* a Sunday, from *John Philips* of *Lubenham*, and his Wife's absence from Church (so called) three days, and for that, fined 6*s.* were distrained Goods worth 7*s.* From *Thomas Corby* of *Turlington*, for the like three days absence fined 3*s.* were Goods distrained worth 6*s.*

Northamptonshire, *by Warrants from* Henry Benson.

THe 24th of the 1st Moneth, (called *March*) 1682. from *Benjamin Wright* of *Blaxly*, were taken fifty four foot of Oak Boards, worth 6*s.* 9*d.*

The 5th of the 3d Moneth, 1682. from *George Eayre* of *Farthingstone*, of Cattel and Houshold-Goods, and all sorts (as appears by the List) they met with, worth 46*l.* 15*s.* 11*d.*

[Note, *John Hutton*, the Priest, spake to the Officers after his service, *To take care to mannage the work throughly*; and *Thomas Hog* the Informer stood up at the same time, and promised him, *That he would see it throughly mannag'd*, which he did; for he, with the Priest's Man, the other Informer, waited on them all the while, looking up and down the House, and forcing, (as much as in them lay) the Officers to make Spoil of all; only the Priest gave order to let their Beds alone at that time. But they threaten daily to come for more, not having brought, as they say, to make up the Money.

And the same day from *Susanna Bilton* of *Farthingstone*, for 10*l.* Goods worth 18*l.* at a moderate price. *Thomas Hog* and *Matthew Arnold* the Priest's servant, Informers, much desiring the Officers both by flattery and threatning to mannage the work throughly, as the Priest had done. And when they had sold the Goods, they brought her but 5*l.* again: But the Widdows Relations and the Officers, without her consent, gave part of it to the Priest for a *Mortuary* for her Husband lately deceased, though buried among Friends; and the other part of it for Steeple-house sess; and the remaining 8*s.* would have forced upon her, which she refused.

The 18th of the 3d Moneth, 1682. from *John Eayre* of *Lisborow*, Goods worth 4*l.* 14*s* 3*d.*

[Note, *Joseph England* the Constable, told the other Officers, *If they could have got good store of Goods into his Hand, he would have given them all; but now he would give them none.*]

God's

Gods Mercies testified unto,

AND

Man's Cruelty bore witness against.

Being a faithful Demonstration, given forth in the Dread of the Lord, against the Cruelty of

PERSECUTION.

GOD Almighty, who is over all blessed forever, having, according to his pretious Promise of old, *given his Son for a Light to the* Gentiles, *that he might be his Salvation to the ends of the Earth*, hath among the many Nations, Kingdoms and Countries of this World beheld and visited this little Northern Nation of *ENGLAND*, and in his Love and Mercy hath he caused his Blessed and acceptable day of Salvation to dawn upon it *to give Light to them that sit in Darkness, and in the Region of the Shadow of Death*, by which Pretious Light, as many as have taken heed unto it, and faithfully obeyed it, have known their feet turned into the way of Peace, Glory and endless Praises to the God of living Mercies for evermore; and blessed be his Name that a Remnant hath received and embraced the Visitation of his acceptable Day, in the Light whereof, as they have walked, they have been gathered out of the World, and its Ways and Worships, and departed from among them, who are of the Night, *who love Darkness rather than Light, because their deeds are Evil.*

And ever since the day in which the Lord hath thus appeared, great hath been the Opposition that hath been met withal by these whom God hath thus gathered: Oh! how hath the Prince of Darkness, with all his Power, Force and Instruments gathered themselves together, and raised up their Might and Strength,

Strength, that they might bring to nought and extinguish the Work of the Lord, and scatter again the People whom he hath gathered, that they might not remain nor appear upon the face of the Earth, as many might be the Testimonies of the Unworthyness of many of this Generation, who have not only resisted the blessed appearance of the Light of the Son of God in themselves, but have also with force and violence sought the *destruction* of them that have received him, and believed in him. Large is the Record of Cruelty, which at sundry times, and in divers manners, and in several places of this Nation for *twenty* or *thirty* years last past, by *Imprisonment*, *Banishment* and *Spoiling* of *Goods*, which hath been acted in furious Severity, without any pity, even against them that have truly feared God, and Worshipped him; so that it may justly befall thee, O *England!* to be Judged and chastised because thou hast been so cruel and Unmercifulto those of thy own Nation. And though the Lord hath many times appeared in Wrath, and executed his Judgments against thy Inhabitants, because of these things, whereby thy *heart* hath been *humbled* a little, and brought down for a time, and thy cruelty and violence hath ceased for a season; yet alas! as Peace, Ease and Prosperity hath abounded again, how have many of thy Inhabitants (like *Pharoah* of old) even hardened their hearts and renewed their *Unchristian-like* Envy, to oppress their near innocent Neighbours within thee, and persue them to Destruction? And (with the several places within thy borders) O *England!* we in the County of *Northampton* have not escaped thy Wrath nor been altogether unsensible sometimes of the implacable outrage of some of thy Inhabitants against us, although God in his Justice hath taken away several of them, and as an evident token of his great displeasure hath cut off some in the height of their Fury when their Wrath was kindled against us, which the prudent among the Magistrates have seriously observed, and taking Example by it, have with-holden their hands from such like Actions, and been moderate and peaceable in their places for their times, by which they have obtained a good Report in the Country, and been honourable among the people; yet how are others again risen up in the Youth of their years, who have not known nor took notice

what

what the Lord hath wrought, but in the heat of their Fury are spending their Strength, to fill up the measure of their Fathers Sins, as is largely witnessed and verified at and near about the Town of *Farthingston*, in the County of *Northampton*, where Satans Seat is, who, by his Agents and Subjects of his Kingdom, is there executing his great Wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a short time. O ye People of the Town of *Farthingston!* Consider and observe how you are become as furious Captives of the Enemy of your own Souls, who being hurried by him and his Ministers, are rushing into Persecution as the Horse rusheth into the Battel, therefore are your hearts filled with Wrath and Insatiable Envy against God and his People, and the Righteous Worship, by which his Name is honoured in the Earth.

O *Farthingston*, *Farthingston!* my Soul has been distressed for thee, and my Spirit oppressed within me, in the remembrance of you, O ye People of *Farthingston!* And in the sence of the Cruelty of your Actions, oh what manner of Lamentation may be taken up for you? or what may be said unto you, that you might hear, fear, and be warned, at least in this your day, of the Evil of your Ways, before the time of your Visitation pass over, and Repentance be utterly hid from your Eyes. Alas! alas, for you! how is hardness of Heart seized upon you! How has Darkness, even gross darkness covered you! that while you pretend to Loyalty, your Passion is so hot, that you will not admit of true *Christianity!* O what will become of you! have not you declared your Sin as *Sodom*, and your Iniquity as *Gomorrah?* Who being like unto you in their day, even filled with Violence, became dreadfull Examples of Gods Judgments: And do ye think, O ye Inhabitants of the Town of *Farthingston!* that whilst you are guilty of the same things, you can escape the just hand of the Almighty? O surely nay, your pretended *Christianity* will not secure you, nor the Law you pretended to act by Justifie you in the day when God will plead with you, and require these things of you again, which by Wicked hands through violence and cruelty you have unjustly taken away from those who have had no Helper in the Earth. Wherefore consider and read *John* 15. 7. *Acts* 5. 28, 30. By which Scriptures we may understand, that although the Jews said of Christ, *We have a Law, and by our Law*

he

he ought to Dye, yet notwithstanding were they charged by the holy Ghost as *Murderers*, and guilty of Innocent Blood, even as you, notwithstanding your Legal Confidence, will certainly be found in the sight of God deeply guilty of violent Spoil and cruel wrong; therefore consider, and ponder your Wayes, and take a view of your Actions; have you done as you would be done unto? Do you desire to find no more pitty from him to whom you owe ten thousand Talents, than you have shewed towards your fellow Servants, as by the Parable you may read your portion, *Mat.* 18. 33, 34. For certainly God that made you will reckon with you, and the Almighty will call you to an account for those things; and as you have had Compassion on your fellow Servants, even so may you expect to find pitty from the Lord; and alas! if thus it must be measured unto you, how little will that be to you, who have not counted it enough to take away all outward supplies, but after you have stripped of all, to cast into Prison; you who have not Compassionated the Condition of the Fatherless, nor Widdows, nor yet spared to Spoil the Goods of the Motherless Child! O Mercileſs Cruelty! How insatiable has your Wrath been! but certainly the Lord will plead for these things, and his Soul will be avenged on such a People as this, although your Teachers that lead you, may cry *Peace, Peace* unto you, and may with Confidence preach your Security for a Season, in the possession of your Ravenous prey, which you have so greedily taken away from the Innocent and helpless, yet certainly know, God will raise his Witness in you, and the Anguish and Burthen of the Guilt of those things which you have thus received with Joy, and treasured up together with delight, will be as Meat to that worm that will never dye, and as fewel to that fire that will Torment you, and never be quenched, without your timely unfeigned Repentance.

And can you imagine, *O Priest* and *People* of the Town of *Farthingston*! or can you securely think with your selves, that your late unneighbourly & cruel *Unchristian-like* Actions will be taken for your *Loyalty to the* KING, or any real zeal to his *Laws* and *Government*, as you so stoutly pretend? O Surely nay; this Covering is too narrow to hide your Wickedness and the inbred Abomination of your Hearts; for know assuredly, the day which

is dawned doth discover your secret Iniquity, and the Light which you persecute doth make you openly manifest, that it is not true *Loyalty*, but *Covetousness* which is *Idolatry*, which as a raigning Pestilence has begun in the heart of your Priest. And behold! how has this *Plague* broke forth among you, and infected almost his whole Congregation? And so contagious is this Distemper among you, that without Remedy it will prove eternally mortal unto you, except you Repent; and because of the noysom effect of this your *Covetousness* and furious *Idolatry*, how are you become as an odium to your Neighbour-Towns, and as a loathsom ill Savour to sober and considerate People, who do hear of and abhor your abominable Actions? So that it may be said of thee, O *Priest*, and you his captive Proselites of the Town of *Farthingston*, that although many have done wickedly, yet as in the County of *North-hampton* you have exceeded them all. Oh! therefore consider what is the matter, examine a little what aileth you? O People! you who once, many of you, were freely inclinable to moderate attention to the divine Testimonies of Gods pretious Truth, which hath been sounded among you through the Servants of the Lord in our Assemblies: O! how strangely is the State of your hearts changed! What! is a *Woolf* in *Sheeps* cloathing entred in among you, and e'er you saw thorow his false covering? how are you begotten into the same Woolish Nature by him? So that some of you are not only Ravening after the same Ungodly Prey with him, but others of you are (even you your selves) become as Captives of Prey to his Ravenous Teeth. Alas for you! O poor People, that although some of you do now see that his fruits do clearly make him known so to be, yet do not know how to deliver your selves from his oppressive Yoke, but are driven by violence, with him, to do that with your hands, which the witness of God in your own hearts condems you for: Oh! my Soul truly pities you, for your Condition is deplorable: But how are some of you, like the Boar out of the Wood, and the wild Beast of the Field, even given up with greedines to waste and devour God's Heritage, in this place, to your power? but the Lord will too strong for you: Oh, that it should be so with you! that men, pretending to *Christianity*, should not only so far lose the *Nature* of *Christians*, but even of men also, and be degenerated into the very nature of *Beasts*, even *Beasts of prey!*

And

And this is the Effect of the Miniſtry of your Teacher, and the unhappy fruits his Preaching has produced, ſience he came among you, that inſtead of turning you from the power of Satan, unto God, you are become many fold more the Children of the Devil than you were before, unto whoſe diſcipline you have ſo devoutly proſelited your ſelves, that you are become greatly alienated in your Mindes from the fear of him who hath ſaid, *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* And may it not be truly ſaid of you, that you have not been more effectually zealous to any Duty, than to oppreſs your Neighbours with the great Cruelty, much like in Nature to thoſe of whom Chriſt foretold *John*, 16. 2. *who ſhould think they did God Service by killing his Servants?* Wherefore, O People! conſider your Wayes, and be ſtill; fear the Lord, and not man; Tremble before him, and dread his mighty Name, leſt his Wrath break forth againſt you, and you periſh in his diſpleaſure; For if we reaſon a little with you, what may we ſay unto you, O People! wherefore do ye ſo contemn God? Wherefore is it that you have ſuch deſpite againſt him, that you will not ſuffer thoſe that love him to Aſſemble themſelves together, to wait upon him, and to perform that duty which they owe unto him, and which Conſcientiouſly they believe the Lord their God requireth at their hands? O! why is it ſo, that for this, and no other cauſe, you are ſo Angry with them, and ſo Outragious againſt them? Do you grudge againſt it, that the holy Name of the Lord, the God of Heaven ſhould be honoured amongſt men in the Earth? or do ye think hereby to draw us away from the Profeſſion of our precious Faith to have fellowſhip with you, and to be conformable unto you in your vain Worſhips, who are deſtroying and perſecuting us? If ſo, I muſt tell you, aſſuredly your Hopes will periſh, and your expectation will deceive you; *For behold, the Lord is our Rock, and the God of* Iſrael *is our Salvation; And as we abide faithful to him, you ſhall never be able to pluck us out of his hand though for a ſeaſon you may execute your Wrath in this your hour and power of darkneſs.* Yet the hope that we have in him doth more confirm us; than the greateſt of Cruelties which you can threaten, can terrifie us; and it is freely our choiſe, rather to be of the number of thoſe that are in Jeopardy to ſuffer Affliction by you, than to have fellowſhip with you in your preſumptuous ſins, or to be joyned unto you in

your

secure from.

Therefore, in time be warned of the evil of your ways, Repent of the Works of your hands, and of the Cruelties Actions, O *Priest* and *People* of the Town of *Portsmouth* Judgment without Mercy be your portion (who have shewn no Mercy) and you justly receive at the last, the heavy Sentence of those unto whom Christ will say, *Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me.* And thus in the fear of the Lord, according to Truth, not with flattering words, but in plainness of Speech, having cleared my Conscience unto you, I remain,

A true Lover of the Soul's of all men, and one that unfeignedly desireth the increase of Love and peace among all people forever.

William Pooley.

THE END.

2206